



FROM the LAND

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New 182-Acre Preserve in Canaan A Registry Property Comes of Age

IN 1985, Edmund and Marshall Dean agreed to register their property on Page Road and Route 7 in Canaan with The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter. There was no binding commitment; the brothers simply recognized that the Conservancy considered the property ecologically valuable, and agreed to let the chapter know if they ever decided to sell the property.

Ten years later, Edmund Dean sold the 182-acre parcel that had belonged to him and his late brother to the chapter, creating the new Hollenbeck Preserve on Dec. 8, 1995.

"This is a great example of the registry program at work," said Carolyn K. Evans, chapter director of land protection. "It's doing exactly what we hoped it would do: it put us in touch with the owners of this important land in a friendly, positive way. They agreed to give us the right of first refusal on their land and, a decade later, that's exactly what Mr. Dean did."

This property in the Falls Village section of Canaan was one of the first in the chapter's registry program, which Evans had just started in 1985. The program promotes agreements between the Conservancy and the owners of ecologically significant land to exchange information, and for the landowner to notify the Conservancy

if the property or significant adjacent property is offered for sale. The Connecticut Chapter currently has 221 tracts totalling 1,611 acres in its registry program.

The chapter purchased this scenic and biologically rich property in a bargain sale for \$136,500 from Edmund H. Dean of Canaan and Mildred D. Marshall and Mafred D. Allyn of North Canaan. The chapter made the purchase using its revolving Land Preservation Fund, and is seeking to raise \$186,000 to cover closing costs and create a stewardship endowment for the property.

"The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter is very grateful to Mr. Dean, Ms. Marshall and Ms. Allyn for allowing us to purchase this important piece of land so

affordably," said Chapter Executive Director Leslie N. Corey Jr. "They have made a very important contribution to nature and to the local landscape, and we all owe them a big 'thank you.' We're hoping for strong support from members statewide in this fundraising effort."

"Open space is one of the most important assets our town has to offer," said Susan Kelsey, chair of the Falls Village Conservation Commission. "I feel fortunate that organizations such as the Conservancy exist, in order to help guarantee the continued existence of these open spaces."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)



THE ONE CONSERVANCY

One of the core values of The Nature Conservancy is the concept of "One Conservancy." What does this mean?

The Conservancy's national statement of values puts it like this: "Our strength and vitality lie in being a single, unified organization working locally to achieve Conservancy-wide objectives. We value the collective and collaborative efforts that are so essential to our success, and we believe in maintaining constructive and supportive relationships with each other."

To a casual reader, this idea seems almost too obvious to mention. Why wouldn't the different branches of an organization collaborate?

In its 45 years, The Nature Conservancy has grown to be a large and complex organization, with offices in every state and more than 200 operating centers — regional offices, preserve offices, special project offices — across the country. Add to that our offices in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific, and you have many different entities vigorously employed.

Each of these offices sets its own goals and its own budget, a policy that encourages local initiative, innovation and economy. Although our home office in Arlington, Va. is in constant contact with us, we in the field enjoy a great deal of independence and full responsibility for our programs.

That's why the One Conservancy ideal is so vital to our success. As we in Connecticut vigorously pursue our land protection, research, stewardship, and other programs, as well as essential funding for them, it is easy for us to get a bad case of tunnel vision, forgetting the broad needs of the Conservancy.

The staff of the Connecticut Chapter is working to keep the "big picture" of the Conservancy's national conservation goals in mind, and we encourage our members to think in the same way. As important as it is to "Think Globally, Act Locally," acting locally will not always solve our planet's gravest environmental problems.

Sometimes it's necessary to look beyond our back yard, to help our partners who are fighting the extinction crisis where it is most dire, and where resources are scarce. It's for our own good: Nature doesn't conform to political boundaries.

In Connecticut, we are trying to put this concept into practice in several ways. We are working to raise \$440,000 for the Darien National Park in Panama and \$260,000 for the Blue Mountains/John Crow Mountains National Park in Jamaica, two international "Last Great Places" projects, and are seeking support from Connecticut donors for other Last Great Places. We are sharing the services of a field biologist on a natural community classification project (see page 5) with the Rhode Island Field Office. And we may possibly collaborate with the Massachusetts Field Office in northwestern Connecticut and southwestern Massachusetts in the near future.

Needless to say, our priority is still conservation in Connecticut. But Connecticut's natural beauty is part of a much grander picture, a tapestry spread out across the Earth. We can take pride in keeping our part of the tapestry whole, and offering reinforcing strands, where we can, to help strengthen the rest.

© Bonnie Corey



— LES COREY
Vice President
and Executive
Director

On the cover:
Nesting vesper sparrow
(*Pooecetes gramineus*), a species
that prefers grasslands of the kind
The Nature Conservancy seeks to
maintain at the new Hollenbeck
Preserve in Canaan.

New Preserve

CONTINUED FROM PAGE I



This is a biologically significant site that provides habitat for several types of rare plants and animals. It will be open to the public for hiking and other educational and recreational activities that do not disturb these species.

The property contains a swamp wooded with a mix of red maple, black ash, white pine and hemlock trees to the north and west and open fields to the south and east. The Hollenbeck River, which defines the east boundary, flows north and then west to the Housatonic River, running through Robbins Swamp, the largest inland wetland in the state. The property is bounded to the south by Page Road and Route 7. State-owned land borders the parcel to the north.

There are active hay fields on the property, and the Conservancy is studying ways to accommodate their continued use. "We would like to keep that area in agricultural use, while maintaining it for grassland birds" such as bobolink and vesper sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*), an endangered species in Connecticut, Corey said. The chapter has consulted ornithologist Dr. Robert Askins, a professor of zoology at Connecticut College and a chapter trustee, on the best way of managing this habitat. (Please see related article, page 3). 

— JOHN MATTHIESSEN

Above:
Diane Mayerfeld of the state
Department of Environmental
Protection presents a registry plaque
to brothers Marshall (left) and
Edmund Dean on February 11, 1985.

Afield with the Birds

One of the things that makes Connecticut such an appealing place to live is the variety and abundance of birds with which we share the land. But habitat for one special group of birds, those that nest and raise their young in wide open fields, continues to decline in Connecticut, threatening to reduce our avian diversity.

Take a walk at the Conservancy's Sunny Valley Preserve in New Milford and Bridgewater or our new Hollenbeck Preserve in Canaan — which have historically been farmed for hay — to see what is at risk. Field birds such as bobolinks, black and white and cream colored, flutter like butterflies over their territories in the tall grass, advertising their presence with an amazing cacophony of honks, squeaks, and whistles. Meadowlarks, bright yellow breasts dramatically emblazoned with a black chevron, sing their more subdued song from prominent fenceposts.

Paradoxically, while farms are the habitat these and other field birds require, farming itself threatens their ability to raise young. Connecticut was never a major population center for grassland birds, but any effort to protect these species here is warranted by

their rapid decline elsewhere in their natural ranges. Already, such rare species as grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) and upland sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*) are reduced to remnant populations in many areas, including Connecticut.

Therefore, it is important that The Nature Conservancy, other conservation organizations, and private landowners find ways to protect and manage open grassland for the birds, such as our compatible agriculture program for grassland birds at the Sunny Valley Preserve.

At Sunny Valley, we are connecting existing fields and opening new ones to create the larger expanse favored by some birds. At the same time, we are continuing low-intensity agricultural use of the fields for cattle pastures and hay harvest on schedules designed to avoid disrupting bird nesting.

Bobolinks and meadowlarks ... their names alone evoke images of sun-dappled meadows, breeze-rippled and bespeckled with wildflowers, alive with dancing and singing birds. It's all part of the landscape mosaic that makes Connecticut a great place to live, whether or not you're a bird. 

— CHRIS WOOD



© Chris Wood



© Chris Wood

Above, meadowlark, and right, bobolink, both grassland bird species photographed at the Sunny Valley Preserve.

The Nature Conservancy At Work

	Worldwide	Connecticut
Total Transactions:	16,992	653
Total Acres Protected:	8,883,000	20,577
Total Acres Registered:	463,000	6,140
Total Acres Saved:	9,346,000	26,717
Members:	813,898	17,729
Corporate Associates:	1,500	29

Return of the Native

Conservation begins at home — or sometimes, in the office parking lot!

In the summer of 1995, the managers of the Connecticut Chapter's office building in Middletown decided to replace the shrubs in the parking lot, which had grown too tall and obstructed vision.

When chapter staff heard that the replacement was to be winged euonymus, an invasive plant on some Connecticut preserves, a staff delegation visited building manager Ed Cole of Real Estate Services, bringing a copy of Connecticut Native Shrubs, and asked him to consider using native species instead. Although this required modifying the nursery order and an increase in costs, Cole agreed.

Two different plants, creeping juniper — an evergreen — and winterberry were planted in the divider between the car rows. By fall, both species had produced fruits and berries that will be enjoyed by birds and small mammals. We applaud this effort by Ed Cole and Real Estate Services, and look forward to enjoying its continued benefits. 

— BETH LAPIN

Two brochures, Connecticut Native Trees and Connecticut Native Shrubs, are available free from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, Conn. 06013, (860)675-8130. In addition to listing suggested native species, the brochures list nurseries that carry them.

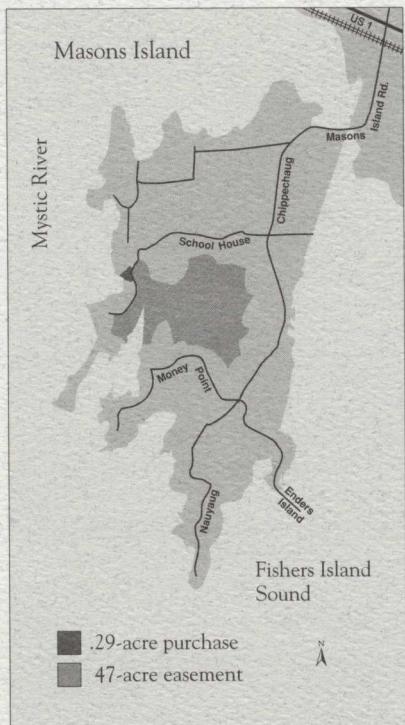
Chapter Creates 47-Acre Mason's Island Preserve

Generous Bequest Funds Purchase

© Leslie N. Corey Jr.



Masons Island, Mystic.



The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter protected 47 acres of wildlife habitat on Mason's Island in Mystic on November 22 in a cooperative effort with the Mason's Island Company of Mystic.

The chapter purchased from the Mason's Island Company a 0.29-acre waterfront parcel and a 47-acre conservation easement in the center of the island for a total of \$100,000. The purchase was funded by a bequest from the late Jess T. and Marguerite Adkins, former residents of Mason's Island.

This valuable, buildable waterfront property provides habitat for a variety of migratory birds, including nesting osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), which is listed as a species of special concern in Connecticut. The Mason's Island Company agreed to put the property into permanent conservation protection at a fraction of its fair market value, in effect making a generous charitable donation to The Nature Conservancy.

Brothers Rufus Allyn of Mystic and Louis P. Allyn of North Grafton, Mass. are the principals of the Mason's Island Company.

The Nature Conservancy will finance this

purchase with partial use of a \$500,000 bequest from the estate of the late Jess T. Adkins, who lived for many years on Mason's Island and died in 1988. Adkins willed these funds to the Conservancy for protecting coastal land in eastern Connecticut.

The Conservancy will use another \$100,000 from the bequest to create a stewardship endowment for the new preserve. Jeffrey C. Hahner of Westport, the executor of Adkins' estate, has agreed that the Conservancy may keep the remainder of the bequest in a capital reserve fund in memory of the Adkins for future projects in the area.

The Conservancy will place a monument in memory of the Adkins on the waterfront parcel at a ceremony this spring. Because the Adkins maintained a residence on Mason's Island for many years, this new preserve there is exactly what they would have wanted, Hahner said.

As the roads on Mason's Island are private, public access to the property will not be available.

A conservation easement — in Connecticut called a conservation restriction — is a legal agreement a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on a specific piece of property.

The western 17 acres of the easement is salt marsh bordered on the west by School House and Ram Point Roads. The eastern portion is red maple and oak tree upland forest with frontage on Chippeaug Trail.

Although an assessment of the fair market value of the property has not been made, it would have yielded several buildable lots in a desirable area.

"The Nature Conservancy deeply appreciates the generosity of the late Mr. and Mrs. Adkins, who made this new preserve possible," said Leslie N. Corey Jr., executive director of The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter. "The Allyn's have also made an important contribution to conservation with this bargain sale. This is highly valuable land that they have helped set aside as a permanent undeveloped tract."

— JOHN MATTHIESSEN

A Community Approach to Conservation

Recognizing unique and exemplary natural communities is the focus of a recent conservation effort undertaken by The Nature Conservancy's Conservation Science Division, Connecticut's Natural Diversity Database, and Rhode Island's Heritage Program. This effort intends to enhance the practice of conservation by applying basic ecological principles, such as the concept of natural communities.

I Communities exist in the natural world because diverse organisms are not distributed haphazardly. Rather, organisms coexist as aggregates, prevailing in suitable habitats in which they interact and carry out their existence.

The study of these communities is fundamental to the practice of conservation. Understanding the underlying ecological processes and the historical context that allow these novel associations to develop is essential in order to devise and achieve appropriate conservation objectives. The strategy is simple: protect the natural community and save the biological diversity contained within.

One such uncommon community in Connecticut is the Atlantic white cedar swamp forest, dominated by *Chamaecyparis thyoides*, a tall evergreen tree known also as eastern, coastal, southern, or Atlantic white cedar. Locally, cedar swamps occur mainly in eastern Connecticut, scattered in small, individual stands totaling approximately 2,000 acres.

In southern New England, the formation of cedar swamps corresponds closely with depressions in land once covered by glaciers.

Cedars generally thrive in an extreme environment characterized by waterlogged, nutrient-poor, acidic, organic sediments exhibiting a highly variable watertable. Natural disturbances, such as small fires, temporary flooding, and windthrows, are required to suppress the invasion of hardwoods and enable the regeneration of cedar trees.

Cedar swamps are declining in Connecticut. Historically, cedar swamps were either logged for valuable timber products, drained for agriculture, or converted for land development.

Other threats to remaining cedar swamps are more subtle. Suppression of natural disturbances, hydrological changes, and nutrient enrichment from non-point sources may constitute changes to the swamp environment that are detrimental to cedar regeneration and encourage the invasion of deciduous trees that could eventually eclipse the cedars.

From the community perspective, changes in the species inhabiting the cedar community may offer clues to the ecological health of the cedar swamp. For example, changes in the relative abundance of species typical to cedar swamps may reflect just natural variation. However, the increasing dominance of hardwood trees or the appearance of exotic species may indicate subtle threats to the cedar swamp community. Therefore, studying these swamps as natural communities will help us take stock of Atlantic white cedar swamps, and when possible, take action to protect them. — NELS BARRETT



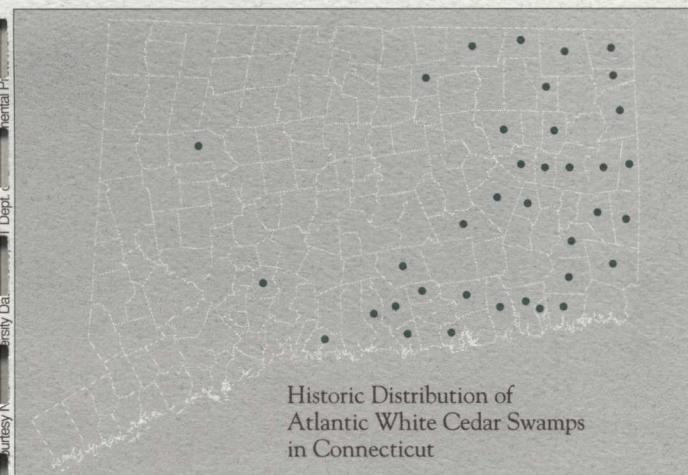
© Nels Barrett

▲ A typical Atlantic white cedar swamp.

Wish List

Chapter members have been very generous in lending and donating useful items to us. Any in-kind donation is tax-deductible. You can contact the Connecticut Chapter office at (860) 344-0716. Some of our current needs are:

- Kevlar chaps and shirt (both "one-size-fits-all," large or extra-large).
- Cellular phone for in-vehicle and in-the-field use. A donation of the first three-to-six-months of service would also be welcome.
- Backboard-type backpack for carrying chain saw.



Williams Mansion Donated to Nature Conservancy

New Self-Guided Nature Trail at Devil's Den Preserve

The Connecticut Chapter's Devil's Den Preserve in Weston and Redding now has its first Interpretive Trail Guide.

The guide is designed both to provide flexible environmental education for individuals, families, or groups visiting the Den, and to make it easy for visitors to learn from the 1,720-acre preserve and relate environmental information to their own lives.

The booklet was designed both to provide flexible environmental education for individuals, families, or groups visiting the Den, and to make it easy for visitors to learn from the 1,720-acre preserve and relate environmental information to their own lives.

The 48-page booklet, which focuses on the Saugatuck Region of the Den, guides visitors through 19 alphabetical stations along the trails. Each station has a page of questions, followed by a page of information and further discussion. The tour takes approximately two hours and can be completed in a single visit or several shorter visits.

Long-time Den volunteer Dick Maccabe, a graphic designer who has lived in Weston for more than 30 years, illustrated the guide. The Den's Program and Volunteer Coordinator Lillian Willis wrote the guide, with editing and research input from Drs. Stephen Patton and Lise Hanners, director and assistant director of the preserve.

The Devil's Den Preserve received grants from the Anne S. Richardson Foundation of New York City and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for partial funding of the guide. EPA's Environmental Education Grants focus on projects that improve environmental education teaching skills, facilitate environmental partnerships, or raise the general public's environmental awareness.

The Interpretive Trail Guide is available from a special distribution box at the Map Shelter in the Den parking lot. The booklet

In January, Dr. Samuel B. Rentsch Jr. donated his 25-room Georgian Revival residence in Glastonbury known as the Williams Mansion to The Nature Conservancy.

Proceeds from the sale of the mansion and surrounding 7.3 acres will fund a Charitable Remainder Trust with income to Dr. Rentsch and his wife, Robin. After their lifetimes, the trust's principal will be equally divided between The Nature Conservancy's Connecticut and Virginia chapters and used to fund conservation work.

Dr. Rentsch purchased the 11,500-square-foot Victorian mansion in 1959. It has ten fireplaces, porticos on three sides, four colossal Corinthian columns, and an elegant formal garden. It was built in 1906 by Samuel H. Williams, whose father founded a soap manufacturing company in 1847 that became a major Glastonbury industry.



© Barbara Ashley

is for sale to the public for \$3, but it may be borrowed at no charge if returned in good condition to the distribution box.

In each booklet is an Evaluation Form. The Devil's Den staff is eager for feedback from those who have used the self-guide booklet. Any completed form should be deposited in the guide distribution box or mailed back to the Den, P.O. Box 1162, Weston, Conn. 06883.

► Devil's Den Assistant Director Dr. Lise Hanners, Dick Maccabe, and Lillian Willis, Devil's Den Program and Volunteer Coordinator (left to right), with a copy of the Den's new Interpretive Trail Guide.

"This is a spectacularly generous gift on the part of Dr. and Mrs. Rentsch," said Connecticut Chapter Executive Director Leslie N. Corey Jr. "People don't always think of making donations of real estate, but this magnificent donation will not only assist the Rentschs in their retirement, but represents an important long-term gift to the Conservancy."

"We are delighted that this house we are so fond of will make an impact for conservation in Connecticut and Virginia," Dr. Rentsch said. "I hope that others will also consider making this kind of donation."

"We are very pleased that the Rentsch's would consider this as a viable way of handling this property," commented Lisa Olson, chair of The Nature Conservancy's Glastonbury Subchapter, "And that they are so environmentally concerned that they are willing to do this to help the Conservancy in Connecticut and Virginia."

The Williams Mansion is expected to be the most valuable residential property ever received by the Connecticut Chapter. Donors frequently make gifts of commercial or residential real estate — land that is not of ecological significance — to The Nature Conservancy, knowing it will be sold, and the funds used to protect rare species. The Conservancy refers to these kinds of gifts as "trade lands."

— CAROL KIMBALL



TIDELANDS OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

© Harold E. Melde



Showing Their SAVvy

Although the discovery of a new invasive plant that can displace native species is never welcome, the sooner we know of these problems, the sooner we can start looking for a solution. That's one of the benefits of the Tidelands of the Connecticut River program's two-year study of submerged aquatic vegetation in the region.

The submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) field team comprised botanist Margaret Ardwin and Laurie Giannotti, a specialist in using the technology needed for the study. Although the team completed its field work for the study last summer thanks to a grant from the Long Island Sound Research Fund, analysis of the data continues.

Submerged aquatic vegetation includes plants that grow completely underwater or just up to the water's surface. Tapegrass (*Vallisneria americana*), for example, is an SAV with long, thin leaves that float on the water's surface at low tide, with numerous plants often growing together to form a "bed." Algae were not included as SAVs in this study.

SAVs are a vital component of aquatic ecological

systems, providing food for waterfowl, small mammals and invertebrates, and habitat and nursery areas for many fish and invertebrates. In addition, SAVs may act as an indicator of water quality.

In the Tidelands region, the only study prior to this one to look at the distribution and abundance of SAVs was done in 1947 by the state Board of Fisheries and Game. The work of the chapter's SAV field team over the past two summers has created a current database for the entire Tidelands area, including the locations of major SAV beds, the species within those beds, and associated physical characteristics such as salinity, substrate composition (such as sand or muck) and water temperature.

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SAVvy

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

photos © Julian Barrett



Top: Technical Specialist Susan Mickolyzck (left) and botanist Margaret Ardwyn collect data on submerged aquatic vegetation in the summer of 1994. Bottom: Susan Mickolyzck prepares equipment for submerged aquatic vegetation research.

On the cover:
Chester Creek, one of numerous sites of submerged aquatic vegetation research.

Below:
Hunter Brawley at Post Cove in Deep River.



Giannotti and computer consultants Kevin Joy and Sandy Prisloe entered these data into a Geographical Information System (GIS) database at EnviroGraphics in Chester (see next page) so they can be easily accessed by scientists and natural resource managers. A GIS is a computerized map system that makes it easy to view, analyze and print complex maps with a variety of data overlays.

The team found numerous and extensive SAV beds in the Tidelands area, particularly along the shallow creeks and channels of many of the marshes. More than fifteen species of SAV are found within the system: only a few species occur in the more saline waters closest to Long Island Sound, while more than ten species can be found in freshwater areas such as Whalebone Creek in Hadlyme.

The study yielded the unwelcome news that Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), an invasive species introduced from Europe and Asia, is now found in the region. This plant can grow very rapidly and displace native species.

Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), a saltwater SAV species that is often confused with tapegrass, was not found in the Tidelands area.

The SAV team is still analyzing the data to define the distribution of individual species and the physical characteristics of the plant beds. Results of the study are being used by other researchers, by the state Department of Environmental Protection, and by natural resource managers for various land-use planning decisions.

— JULIANA BARRETT

Project Chapter Teams with Land Trust to Study Pratt and Post Coves

Waist deep in water and a step from vanishing into the primordial ooze of a tidal mudflat, Hunter Brawley looked up anxiously and said, "Pontederia, 50, Peltandra, 25, Zizania, 15, Nuphar, 5." With that Latin litany of plant names duly noted, another vegetation transect was completed, and a hasty retreat from the day's searing sun was fast underway. Such are the glories of a day in the field as a seasonal wetland ecologist.

The Deep River Land Trust hired Brawley last summer to conduct a comprehensive ecological inventory of Pratt and Post Coves, two adjacent freshwater tidal marshes in the heart of the Tidelands of the Connecticut River. Brawley conducted the study by first mapping the area, then dividing it into transects — sample areas — on his map, then methodically examining each transect.

Land Trust Director Tom Gootz approached the chapter in March after learning of a similar collaborative effort between the chapter and the Essex Land Trust in 1994. The Deep River Land Trust agreed to provide a stipend for the summer position, and the chapter provided supervision.

Brawley, a recent masters degree recipient from Connecticut College, was a clear choice for the position. As a graduate student, Brawley had received a Connecticut Chapter Tidal Wetlands Conservation Grant to study the relationship between common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and bird use of Connecticut tidal marshes, and he spent the spring and early summer of 1995 at the chapter's Devil's Den Preserve in Weston and Redding, assisting with worm-eating warbler research. Moreover, his contacts with state Department of Environmental Protection staff helped him obtain critical information for this project.

The benefits of this partnership are numerous. Both the Conservancy and the land trust own land at Pratt Cove, and both are dedicated to studying, protecting, and enhancing the exceptional ecological resources the two coves contain. Perhaps more importantly, the project has paved the way for more innovative cooperative efforts such as local education and outreach between the groups.

"This type of cooperative project is the wave of the future," said Brawley. "It's a great way to inspire local citizens to become involved in conservation." The chapter hopes to expand on the success of the Essex and Deep River projects by working with another Tidelands area land trust in the upcoming field season.

— ANDY CUTKO

Intricate, Intriguing Internships

In a complex orchestration rivaling a United Nations summit, the Connecticut Chapter joined forces with several organizations to create innovative internship programs last summer. The internships united staff expertise and financial resources to address needs shared by partner groups.

The Conservancy, the Connecticut Audubon Society and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) supported a seasonal research assistant at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Stewart B. McKinney Refuge. The chapter recruited for the position and pooled its funding with contributions of DEP and Connecticut Audubon.

The Fish and Wildlife Service selected the final candidate, Jessica Spelke, and trained and supervised her in a wide variety of duties matched to the needs of the partner organizations. She surveyed colonial waterbirds along Long Island Sound, vegetation at wetland restoration sites, and marsh birds at key sites in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region.

Spelke, fresh out of a University of Massachusetts graduate program and preparing for another at the University of Rhode Island, said the internship gave her valuable hands-on experience that balanced her academic interests. "In the future I hope to use scientific research to influence resource management decisions," Spelke said. "This job fits in very well with this goal."

The chapter forged other cooperative internships with the Deep River Land Trust (please see following page) and with DEP's Marine Fisheries Division. In the latter project, Janelle Harings, a 1995 University of Connecticut graduate, spent much of her summer tracking down shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) in the Connecticut River (see *From the Land*, Summer 1995). DEP Fisheries Biologist Tom Savoy supervised the project, which was funded by the Connecticut Chapter.

In addition to the above projects, several other interns contributed countless hours to the chapter's Science and Stewardship Program. The list below is a sample of intern projects completed in 1995.



© Denise Simmonds

- Denise Simmonds, a recent UConn graduate, assisted researcher Phil Nothnagle with monitoring the globally rare Puritan tiger beetle (*Cicindela puritana*). She also found two dragonflies previously not known in Connecticut!

- Chris Sutton, recently returned from the Peace Corps in Africa, produced an in-depth report on the effects of deer browse on certain natural plant communities.

- Chris Soriano, a graduate student at the University of New Haven, used his computer programming skills to develop an inventive, interactive computerized guide for common wetland plants in the Tidelands region.

- Rebecca Schaffner updated a Site Conservation Plan for the Turtle Creek Preserve in Essex.

- Dan Kiernan, a graduate student at Western Connecticut State University, researched the impacts of docks on aquatic flora and fauna.

- Mary Hull, a graduate student at Central Connecticut State University, prepared a comprehensive report on the effects of water quality on sensitive flora and fauna.

— ANDY CUTKO

Above: Puritan tiger beetle photographed by intern Denise Simmonds.

Sandy Prisloe (left) and Kevin Joy of EnviroGraphics.

Tidelands Partner Profile: EnviroGraphics

In order to achieve its ambitious goals, particularly in a many-faceted program like the Tidelands of the Connecticut River, the Connecticut Chapter must work with a number of different partner organizations. Many aspects of this program call for a variety of complex and detailed maps, so we are fortunate to be able to count EnviroGraphics of Chester as one of our important partners.

EnviroGraphics is a private consulting firm specializing in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) founded by Michael "Sandy" Prisloe in 1992 and including Kevin Joy since 1993. A GIS is a computerized map system that makes it easy to view, analyze and print complex maps with a variety of data overlays. With expertise in designing spatial data bases, creating maps and analyzing data through GIS software, Prisloe and Joy have helped the Conservancy plan and implement its conservation work.

Through use of a GIS, staff can access data and equipment sources that would otherwise be unavailable, such as digital elevation models — three-dimensional graphic depictions of landscapes — and a Global Positioning System, a portable unit that pinpoints exact locations by latitude, longitude and elevation.

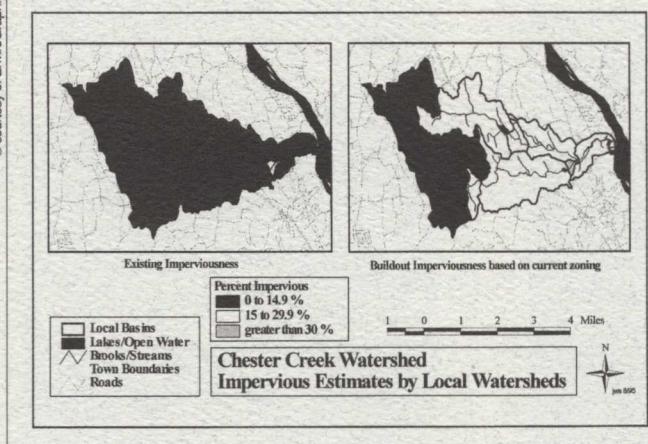
Currently, the Tidelands program and EnviroGraphics have an agreement to share computer equipment and software. Prisloe and Joy have worked with the Conservancy on numerous projects, including the submerged aquatic vegetation study (please see *Tidelands* supplement page 1), the Chester Creek project and the Eightmile River project (page 4). They have also assisted many Tidelands interns on working with GIS.

— JULIANA BARRETT



© Juliana Barrett

Eightmile River



and presented to the public.

There are more than 3,000 protected acres within the watershed to date. The Eightmile River is an important tributary of the Connecticut River, and is a priority for conservationists in the region.

The first goal of this project is to assemble and analyze natural resource and land use data through use of a Geographic Information System (GIS), a computerized mapping system. Many maps are now in production showing information such as permanently protected lands and forest cover types in the Eightmile River watershed.

The second goal of the project is to provide the results of the GIS analyses to area residents and municipal decision makers so that natural resource information can be incorporated into individual and municipal land use planning. In January an advisory committee of land trusts, planning and zoning commissioners, and other land-use decision makers from the towns of East Haddam, Lyme

and Salem met and discussed how to use this information, both in terms of educational programs and workshops for area residents and for municipal decision making.

Thanks to a unique partnership between The Nature Conservancy, the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System and EnviroGraphics (Please see previous page), natural resource information from the Eightmile River watershed is being gathered

Two public information presentations on the project have already been held in the towns of East Haddam and Salem. Presenters included Chester Arnold and Steve Broderick of the UConn Cooperative Extension System; Dr. Robert Askins of Connecticut College; Steve Gephard, a fisheries biologist at the state Department of Environmental Protection; and Dr. Juliana Barrett, Geoffrey C. Hughes Director of the Conservancy's Tidelands of the Connecticut River program. They provided an overview of various aspects of the Eightmile River project and natural resource information on forest interior birds, fisheries, and freshwater tidal marshes.

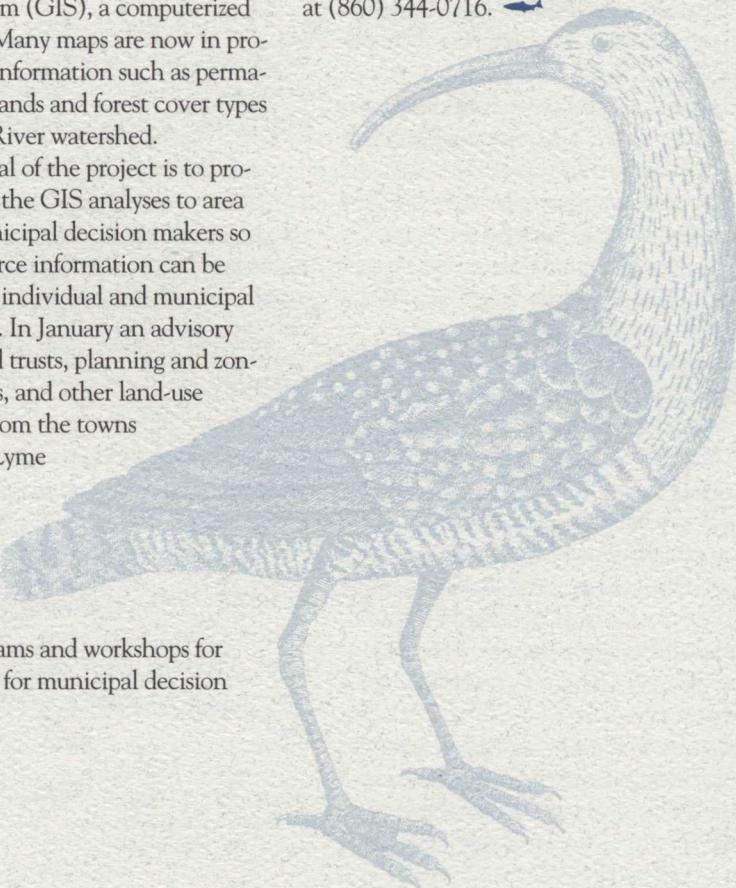
Hosted by the East Haddam, Lyme and Salem Land Trusts, these talks attracted more than 100 people, indicating a great deal of local interest in the Eightmile River watershed. A series of workshops on forest stewardship in the watershed and other topics is now being developed. For more information, please contact Dr. Juliana Barrett at (860) 344-0716. 



CONNECTICUT
CHAPTER

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Dr. Juliana Barrett
Geoffrey C. Hughes' Tidelands
Program Director



How Can We Protect Biodiversity?

Workshop Tackles Tough Questions

The Nature Conservancy and others are concerned with protecting biological diversity — the variety of plants and animals that makes our environment healthy — in Connecticut.

What should be the aim of biodiversity conservation in Connecticut? Preventing extinction of all species currently found in the state? Restoring historic populations, or pre-colonial conditions? These are questions Connecticut conservationists grapple with, and they were at the heart of a workshop at the Conservancy's Middletown office.

Sponsored by the University of Connecticut's Center for Conservation & Biodiversity, the Connecticut Geological & Natural History Survey and the Conservancy, the biodiversity workshop was an effort to look at Connecticut objectively and with an eye toward where the greatest needs exist.

Among those attending the meeting were Assistant Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner David Leff, representatives of a variety of academic institutions throughout the state, and other conservation professionals. Future meetings will address public education, implementation and management of efforts to protect biological diversity, geographical information systems, and current activities of private and public conservation agencies.

While many important conservation questions cannot be easily answered, this initial meeting did bring consensus on several key points:

- Thinking about Connecticut's biological diversity in a broader regional context is important in setting conservation priorities;
- Atlases of certain benchmark groups such as birds, butterflies, aquatic plants, and terrestrial plant communities provide valuable data for making decisions about biodiversity conservation, and should be encouraged;
- Management of conservation areas must allow for change in natural communities. Management to retain early successional habitat — places where habitat was disturbed by human activity, but is gradually moving back toward its natural state — will be necessary in some areas.

Another meeting is planned in January. A continuous theme at the first biodiversity meeting is that *action must begin now*. We hope this is the beginning of additional focused conservation efforts in the state. 

— JUDY PRESTON



"Cows Don't Go to School" and Other Lessons

Afear that sometimes arises when The Nature Conservancy or other conservation group protects a large tract of land from development is of the loss of tax revenue that would have been generated if homes or businesses had been built instead. The same concerns are sometimes expressed when a property receives a reduced open space or farm tax assessment.

Two recent studies demonstrate the opposite to be the case: most often, the cost to a town of servicing residential developed property exceeds the tax revenues generated.

One study, conducted for the Trust for Public Land by Ad-hoc Associates of Salisbury, Vt., divided all 169 Connecticut towns into quintiles (fifths), based on population and a variety of other factors. On average, except for the smallest quintile, towns with more population and retail activity, higher per capita income and lower percent of forested areas had higher tax bills for median-valued houses. This study suggests that even commercial development may ultimately drive up tax rates.

The other study, by the Southern New England Forest Consortium, used a methodology developed by the American Farmland Trust to examine 11 towns, ranging in population from 1,500 to 22,000, in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, including Litchfield, Pomfret, Durham and Farmington.

This study showed that the average residential property in these towns required \$1.14 in town expenditures on schools, road maintenance and other services for every dollar of property tax revenue generated. Commercial and industrial properties required \$.43 in services per tax dollar generated. Unprotected, privately-owned farm, forest and open space land, taxed under a lower current-use assessment, required \$.42 per tax dollar generated.

The results of these studies were presented at an October workshop sponsored by the Land Conservation Coalition of Connecticut and the Trust for Public Land titled "Cows Don't Go to School and Other Lessons."

Cheshire Town Planner Richard Pfurr also spoke at the workshop about the program his town has maintained over the past several years to strategically purchase open space. He pointed out that some Bond Rating agencies have begun to consider well-planned open space acquisition and growth management programs in granting higher municipal bond ratings.

Various speakers at the session stressed that there might be many reasons why communities want and need to encourage all types of well-planned development, but that impacts on town budgets and tax bills need to be looked at comprehensively, and not merely in terms of tax revenues. 

— DAVID SUTHERLAND

The Legacy Club



Taxes Driving You Batty?

Before flying off to the nearest belfry, you might consider two options:

- I. Your outright gift of stocks, bonds or mutual funds will help us preserve nature in many ways and in many places. And you will receive an income tax deduction for the full fair market value of your charitable gift. Or ...
- II. You could donate cash or stock to The Nature Conservancy through a charitable gift annuity or our Long Term Income Fund and enjoy:
 - quarterly income for your lifetime(s)
 - an income tax deduction
 - avoidance of capital gains tax on the transfer of assets
 - membership in the Conservancy's Legacy Club

To participate in a life income gift you must be at least 50 years old and donate at least \$5,000. Annuity rates range from 5.7 percent at age 50 to 11 percent at age 90 or older; the Long Term Income Fund has a variable rate of return.

For more information on these and other Nature Conservancy Planned Gift options, or for information about The Legacy Club, please contact Carol Kimball at the Chapter Field Office at (860) 344-0716.

Work Parties

For more information on volunteer work parties, please call Preserve Steward David Gumbart or Assistant Preserve Steward Marlene Kopcha at (860) 344-0716.

Saturday, March 30
Griswold Point, Old Lyme
Protecting the nesting area of migratory birds.

Saturday, April 20
Sunny Valley Ravine Trail,
New Milford. Trail Work.

THE LEGACY CLUB is The Nature Conservancy's way of honoring those who have remembered the Conservancy in their estate plans — by bequest, life income gifts, or gifts of real estate. The Connecticut Chapter is pleased to list, for the first time, its Legacy Club members.

Anonymous	Barbara J. Fraser	Elizabeth A. Robinson
Daphne Achilles	John Thatcher Frazer	Kathryn L. Rockwell
Pat Anderson	L. Sidney & Elizabeth M. Garvais	Nancy & William Ross
Addison W. Austin	Bette Kahle Geib	David C. & Jean T. Sargent
Austin D. Barney, II	Martha George	Eleanor J. Saunders
Rufus & Charlotte Barringer	Elizabeth H. Gjenvick	A. Clayton Scribner
Mary Rogers Beckett	Mrs. Reynolds Girdler	Olivia R. Scheckleton
Robert G. Bennett	Richard H. & Esther B. Goodwin	Edmund M. & Elizabeth Speer
Diana & Dick Blair	Anthony P. & Sally S. Grassi	Carolyn C. Spencer
Bill Bozzone & Tricia Bauer	Mr. & Mrs. Stewart Greenfield	Barbara S. Spooner
John & Linda Bowers	L. Alan Haines	Bruce St. Arnauld
Clyde S. Brooks	Helen F. Hamlen	Stanley C. Steckler
M. Gilbert Burford	E. Elizabeth Hauser	Joy & Henry Gordon Sweet
Elizabeth H. Carabillo	Tony & Carol Henderson	William & Elaine Tabacinski
Patrick R. Carraher & Betsy A. Kaemmerlen	Michael Himmell	Norris & Dorothea Whitbeck
William & Linda Caval	Evan Claire Hoogs	Sarah Jessica Whitson
Marilyn J. Conklin	Patricia W. & Robert Jaeger	Mrs. Grafton Wiggins
Joan D. Cox	Janet Gemmell Jainschigg	
Jeffrey L. Crown	Mary Janvrin	
Mr. & Mrs. Neil Currie	Barbara & John Kashanski	
Victor C. & Jane P. Darnell	Nancy C. Kindell	
Endicott P. & Jane I. Davison	Robert L. Kleinberg	
Hermine Dawson	Joseph F. Kowalczyk	
Roger H. Dickinson	Jon Lafleur	
Helen Douda	Dwight E. Lowell, II	
Stanley Douda	William B. & Joyce P. Lyons	
Claire C. Dudley	Marguerite V. Martin	
Chester L. & Marjorie Lovett Duff	Patsy J. Mason	
John & Judith Edgecomb	Prall B. Merriam	
Mrs. Robert O. Erisman	Jessica L. Milstead	
Nancy E. Fales	William C. Miller	
Vera C. Fanning	Lucille Monaghan	
Barbara & Chamberlain Ferry	Stephen F. Mumford	
	Mary Mushinsky & Martin Waters	

Elizabeth A. Robinson
Kathryn L. Rockwell
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Eleanor J. Saunders
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William & Elaine Tabacinski
Norris & Dorothea Whitbeck
Sarah Jessica Whitson
Mrs. Grafton Wiggins

New members of The Legacy Club will be listed in future newsletters. If you have already named the Conservancy in your estate plans, please let us know so that we may express our gratitude to you.

This list is accurate to the best of our knowledge. However, if there are errors or omissions, or if you would like to receive information about the Legacy Club, kindly contact Carol Kimball at (860) 344-0716.



Saturday, April 27 Burnham Brook, East Haddam Removing invasive plants.
Saturday & Sunday, April 27 & 28 Falkner Island, Guilford Preparing the nesting site of migratory birds.
Friday, May 10 & Saturday, May 11 Selden Creek, Lyme Removing invasive plants.
Saturday, May 18 Bauer Woods, Salisbury Removing invasive plants.

Trustee Reaches Out to Bolivia

With substantial assistance from Chapter Trustee Stewart Greenfield of Westport, critical populations of jaguars, five other cats, and countless other animals and plants will have a protected home in a park the size of Connecticut in northeastern Bolivia.

The Nature Conservancy's Bolivian partner, Friends of Nature (FAN), recently indemnified the owners of previously-granted logging rights to more than 330,000 acres of spectacular habitat bordering the 2.3 million acre Noel Kempff Mercado National Park. At only \$1.15 per acre, this compensation enables the Bolivian government to declare the area a national park and halt logging of the property. FAN is negotiating to indemnify the owners of another 1.5 million acres, which would roughly double the size of the original park to an area well exceeding Connecticut's 3.2 million acres, and actually simplify the management and enforcement of the existing park.

"For the price of ten building lots in Fairfield County, we can protect a pristine area of extraordinary biological richness the size of Connecticut," Greenfield marveled. He also pointed to the emerging trend of carbon sequestration, as called for under provisions of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, as a compelling aspect of this project. Carbon sequestration refers to the practice of preserving forest areas in order to prevent the massive quantities of carbon dioxide in forest vegetation from being released into the atmosphere, and adding to global warming, when trees are cut and consumed.

"At a time when many governments and private industries are approaching the sequestration concept from a very pragmatic and cost-conscious perspective," Greenfield noted. "The Noel Kempff expansion provides an extraordinarily cost-effective carbon 'sink' large enough to truly affect climates."

Greenfield has pledged more than \$750,000 to protect lands in Paraguay, Brazil, and Panama, and to conduct studies and acquire other lands in the Noel Kempff. The preliminary studies, which have been used to facilitate government participation in the project, revealed 68 additional species of birds in the proposed and acquired park expansion area that are not found among the 560 species residing in the original park.

Based on habitat requirements, the expansion would protect enough space for an estimated 200 to 300 jaguars. In addition to the 150 to 250 estimated to be in the existing park, this would constitute the number of individuals that some scientists contend is necessary to maintain long-term health and genetic variability of a jaguar population.

The Nature Conservancy and FAN have worked together in the Noel Kempff since 1990 to hire and train park guards, develop positive relationships with communities around the park, and construct visitor facilities. In 1992, the Conservancy helped secure a debt-for-nature swap that is now providing funding for initiatives in the park; and, with Greenfield's assistance, helped FAN acquire a 25,000-acre ranch within the park, which now serves as the park headquarters. 

— DAVID SUTHERLAND



▲ **Hikers at Selden Creek.**
Please see schedule of Natural History Walks, page 12.

Ernst & Young LLP Joins Corporate Associates

The accounting firm Ernst & Young LLP (Limited Liability Practice) of Stamford recently joined The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter as a Corporate Associate with a very generous gift of \$10,000.

Robert Kempenich, a partner in the firm, said he was influenced by the words of Michael Fullwood, executive vice president of Witco Corporation of Greenwich and chairman of the chapter's Southwest Connecticut Corporate Associates Committee, at a luncheon Fullwood hosted in September.

"We at Ernst & Young LLP were impressed with Mike Fullwood's remarks and your presentation on The Nature Conservancy's mission and accomplishments," said Kempenich. "Accordingly, we would like to join in partnership with the Connecticut Chapter of the Conservancy as a Corporate Associate. Keep up your good efforts and responsible approach to protecting the environment."

Connecticut Corporate Associates are businesses that contribute unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 or more to the Connecticut Chapter.

"The Nature Conservancy is delighted to work with corporations to achieve objectives which are mutually beneficial," Fullwood said. "Because of its rational, non-confrontational approach, corporations have found the Conservancy an excellent outlet for putting corporate dollars into the communities in which employees live."

"The Connecticut Chapter is well positioned, with our support, to protect the principal, ecologically critical sites in the state within the next decade," Fullwood said. "We believe that the business community should take a lead in supporting this form of direct action to protect Connecticut's environment."

Many Connecticut businesses support the Connecticut Chapter. Phoenix Home Life Executive Vice President Richard Booth, chairman of the Corporate Associates Advisory Board, reports that six new companies have joined since the September luncheon.

For more information about the Corporate Associates program, please call Associate Director of Development Marian Moore at (860) 344-0716. 

— MARIAN MOORE

Mehrhoff Leaves Natural Diversity Database

© John Matthiessen



Lesley Olsen to Direct LTSB

Land Protection Specialist Lesley Olsen took on the additional responsibility of director of the Land Trust Service Bureau in December. Lesley has been associate director of the Service Bureau since 1991 and chapter land protection specialist since 1993, and has worked for the Conservancy since 1985. For the past several years Carolie Evans and Lesley Olsen have shared the responsibility for the operation of the Service Bureau. Lesley will now have full responsibility for the bureau's annual convocation, the semianual newsletters, and for servicing the Connecticut land trusts—usually as a consultant by telephone.

"Lesley already has an excellent relationship with land trusts across the state," said Director of Land Protection Carolie Evans, who had been director of the LTSB since 1986. "I pass this responsibility on to Lesley with complete confidence that the Service Bureau will continue to grow and thrive under her capable and committed leadership."

Austin D. Barney III (center) receives The Nature Conservancy's highest honor, the Oak Leaf Award, from Nature Conservancy Board of Governors Chair Joseph H. Williams (left) and President John C. Sawhill at the Conservancy's national annual meeting on September 28 in Indianapolis.

Botanist and longtime Nature Conservancy confidant Les Mehrhoff has left the Connecticut Geological and Natural History Survey in Hartford to hang his hat at the University of Connecticut, his second home. Les has taken a position as collections manager at the university's G. Safford Torrey Herbarium.

Mehrhoff is recognized as a leading authority on Connecticut plantlife, and on the state's natural history in general. He was instrumental in the establishment of the state natural heritage program—the Department of Environmental Protection's Natural Diversity Database—and worked there from its creation in 1983.

"Les has been a strong advocate for the protection of biodiversity throughout his 20 year career at DEP" said Database Coordinator Nancy Murray. "I'm sure he'll continue to be a key player in the conservation field in Connecticut."

Les Mehrhoff always makes an impression with his imposing figure, grey streaked beard and mesmerizing voice. A sought-after speaker, he has won the hearts of audiences across the state. You will always find a hand lens suspended from a cord around his neck, tucked into his front shirt pocket. Colleague Dr. Antoni W.H. Damman of the Ecology & Evolutionary Botany Department at UConn recalls Les once commenting: "My hand lens is my link with reality. When the bureaucracy gets too bad, I keep it in my hand like a rosary."

The desire to be a naturalist has been with Les ever since he was a kid, and his

ability to share that passion for the natural world is one of his greatest assets. The impression Les most often gives is of boundless, infectious enthusiasm. He manages to bring that energy indoors as well, leading one Conservancy employee to say "I love to see him coming ... he always livens a meeting up."

Before I arrived in Connecticut to begin my job with The Nature Conservancy, I received a bundle of books and pamphlets about the natural history of Connecticut from Les Mehrhoff. Soon after I arrived, he spent a day with me, showing me some of the many botanic wonders of the state. We talked about everything—conservation, planning, threats to the environment, the wonders of discovery, our shared fascination for English naturalist Charles Darwin and his times. One day, when he pulled off the road and jumped out of his car to photograph a billboard, I realized this was no ordinary, lab-coat botanist. The billboard read: "SERIOUSNESS IS A DISEASE."

The Nature Conservancy will continue to seek Les out for advice on many issues concerning conservation in Connecticut, and we look forward to a continuing and fruitful relationship. Hats off to Les, and congratulations on your new position at UConn!

— JUDY PRESTON



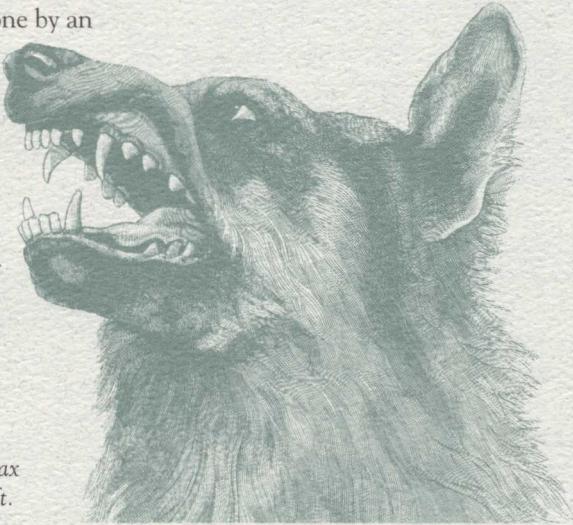
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Say Something Wild to Your Accountant!

If you have your income taxes done by an accountant or tax preparer, this year remind him or her that you want to donate part or all of any refund on your state income taxes to the Endangered Species, Natural Area Preserves and Nonharvested Wildlife programs at the state Department of Environmental Protection and

Save Something on Your Taxes!

Cut out this ad out and give it to your tax preparer as a reminder to make your gift.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Chapter volunteer D. Raye Hodgson of Oxford surveys the wetlands of Bauer Woods in Salisbury for telltale signs of invasive plant species — the colorful spires of purple loosestrife or the airy plumes of the common reed (*Phragmites australis*).

Raye, who began her association with the Conservancy as an intern in the summer of 1994, is now the Weed Watcher coordinator for the chapter. The Weed Watcher program, initiated last summer on a trial basis, coordinates volunteers to identify and map invasive weeds that threaten chapter preserves.

The recipient of a bachelors degree in renewable resources from the University of Connecticut, Raye spent her first summer with the Conservancy on 12 chapter preserves mapping invasive plants.

She now shares this information with the Weed Watchers, coordinates their activities, and leads training sessions. She has gone in the field to verify species identification and provides general support and enthusiasm.

Raye works as the manager of the Mill River Wetland Committee, Inc., in Milford. Local interest in invasive species has been growing and Raye will be sharing her extensive knowledge about them with both students and local officials.

Without Raye, the Weed Watcher program would not exist. The Connecticut Chapter is extremely grateful for Raye's dedication and commitment, and recognized her with the chapter's Oak Leaf award at our 1995 annual meeting. Under Raye's administration, volunteers put in 140 hours in the 1995 field season on this project. Thank you, Raye and fellow Weed Watchers!

— BETH LAPIN

*Above left:
Raye Hodgson (left) with fellow Weed
Watchers Randolph Brown of Oxford
and Carolyn Spencer of Brookline.*

For more information on ...

... Katharine Ordway or Devil's Den Preserves in Weston, please call (203) 226-4991.

... Sunny Valley Preserve in New Milford and Bridgewater, please call (203) 355-3716.

○ Owl Prowl

Devil's Den, Weston

Saturday, March 2

7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Larry Fischer will begin this program with a talk on owls before the walk. Wear warm clothes and bring binoculars and a flashlight.

★ Historical Tour

Devil's Den, Weston

Sunday, March 10

1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Learn how Devil's Den got its name, how native Americans and colonists adapted to this part of Connecticut, and what evidence they left behind. Leaders: Carolyn Butler and Roy Spies

▲ Adult Walk

Katharine Ordway Preserve, Weston

Monday, March 11

1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The characteristically different barks of trees and the formation of stone walls are particularly eye-catching at this time of year.

Leaders: Mary Callahan and Helene Weatherill

■ Family Nature Walk

Devil's Den, Weston

Sunday, March 17

1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Look for signs of spring with leaders Jackie and Dick Troxell.

⊗ Workday

Devil's Den, Weston

Saturday, March 30

1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Help us get the trails ready for spring.

♫ Warbler Walk

Sunny Valley Preserve, New Milford

Sunday, May 19

8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Join friends in search of warblers on this morning walk.

Beginning March 31, visit The Nature Conservancy's new page on the Worldwide Web at <http://www.tnc.org>

The Nature Conservancy

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From The Land

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1996 Natural History Walks

All Chapter Members Welcome

Come join us as we explore some of the most beautiful wild places in Connecticut. The chapter's Natural History Walks are fun and informative, and provide a comfortable learning experience.

All walks are free for chapter members. Because we wish to provide a high quality experience, participation is limited and reservations are required. Please be considerate; if you must cancel, call us so we can contact those on a waiting list. We will mail you a map and other information shortly before the walk. We will go rain or shine! Please, no pets. For information and registration, contact Jean Cox at (860) 344-0716.

Saturday, May 18, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Birding in the Northwest Highlands
Salisbury

Join Sunny Valley Preserve Director and expert birder Chris Wood on a birding adventure in Connecticut's scenic northwest corner. You can expect to see more than 100 species of birds in one of the state's busiest bird migration corridors. Chris has more than 20 years birding experience, and was chair of the state Geological & Natural History Survey's "Atlas of Breeding Birds in Connecticut"

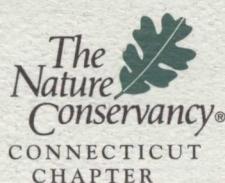
project. Bring a lunch, binoculars, field guides and a spotting scope if you have one. Some birding experience recommended. Ask about car pooling when you register. Limited to ten participants.

Saturday, May 18, 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.
Birding at Selden Creek Preserve
Lyme

Spend the early morning hours birding at this lovely upland preserve overlooking Selden Creek. Migrating songbirds, particularly warblers, will be the highlight. Binoculars are essential, but no previous birding experience is needed. Chapter Preserve Steward and seasoned birder Dave Gumbart will lead. Limited to 15 participants.

Saturday, June 8, 10 a.m. to noon
Wildflowers at Haddam Meadows
Haddam

Join chapter Biological Monitoring Specialist Beth Lapin for a relaxing stroll through the meadows to learn how to identify spring wildflowers. A copy of "Newcomb's Wildflower Guide," sunscreen, water and bug protection are strongly recommended. Come enjoy the spring beauty of wildflowers along the banks of the Connecticut River. Limited to 12 participants.



From The Land

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